The Concerned Professional

Case:

You (____) follow your colleague (____) into a patient’s room to check on her recovery from knee surgery. You notice your colleague immediately begins examining the patient without having stopped to wash his hands with alcohol foam before entering the patient’s room (nor is there any effort to scrub with soap and water at the sink in the room). You decided to have a conversation with your colleague before seeing the next patient.

Your goals are to:

☐ Anticipate pushbacks/reactions & think about your potential response(s)

☐ Ask the colleague to join you, allowing time to talk

☐ Review the circumstances – balance empathy & objectivity

☐ Invite (at least allow with a pause) colleague's views

☐ Invite the colleague to think about why the “event” has occurred and reflect on potential ways to address the issue(s)

☐ Express appreciation for the colleague's consideration and acknowledge her/his contributions to the organization (if possible)

☐ Avoid “enabling” or “authority” comments

Tips for the Concerned Professional

☐ Opening: How will you open the conversation?

☐ Message: What is your message?

☐ Clarifying Questions: What questions will your colleague ask?

☐ Pushbacks/Reactions: What are the potential pushbacks/reactions and how will you respond?

☐ Closing: How will you close the conversation?
Person who doesn’t follow hand washing protocol

Case:

You (____) and your colleague (____) enter a patient room to check on her recovery from knee surgery. Your colleague notices that you immediately being to examine the patient without stopping to wash his hands with alcohol foam before entering the patient’s room (nor did you scrub with soap and water at the sink in the room). Your colleague has stopped you for a quick conversation before seeing the next patient.

In this Case you are to play the role of the colleague who failed to wash your hands in this scenario. The role was created to cover a variety of circumstances; please feel free to make the situation that created the problem more specific to your circumstances. Please do NOT divulge the following to the others except during the role play.

Allow your colleague to share some concerns with you. You should listen long enough to understand the complaint and acknowledge the report was pretty much correct, but then begin to get defensive. Consider using the following responses:

- You acknowledge that you didn’t stop to wash your hands, but you have a ton of patients to see today and need to make your visits as efficient as possible.
- “I wasn’t going to touch the patient . . .”
- “Look, I sanitized when I left the last room, you just didn’t see me...this is no big deal...”
- “Everyone forgets every once in a while when they are in a hurry...”
- “I see failure to follow this protocol and worse all over this place, so why are you focusing on me?”
- “Don’t tell me you’ve never not followed protocol...”
- “Are you bringing this up because I expressed concerns about your ideas at the last meeting?”
- “How come you waited to tell me now? If you are so concerned, why didn’t you stop me before I examined the patient?”

In your role, feel free to be creative. No Oscars will be given, although some may be deserved. One goal is to give your colleagues a sense of the challenges faced when attempting to share about behaviors that could be considered unprofessional.
Observer
Checklist/Reminders for Coffee Cup Conversations

Case:

Two colleagues go into a patient’s room to check on her recovery from knee surgery. One colleague notices that the other immediately begins examining the patient without having stopped to wash his hands with alcohol foam before entering the patient’s room (nor is there any effort to scrub with soap and water at the sink in the room). The concerned colleague decides to have a cup of coffee conversation.

You are the “Observer.” Use this checklist to give feedback to your colleagues doing the role play. Did the “concerned professional”:

- Review the circumstances – balance empathy & objectivity
- Invite (at least allow with a pause) colleague's views
- Invite the colleague to think about why the “event” has occurred and reflect on potential ways to address the issue(s)
- Express appreciation for the colleague's consideration and acknowledge her/his contributions to the organization (if possible)
- Avoid “enabling” or “authority” comments

- **Opening**: How did the “concerned professional” open the conversation?
- **Message**: What was the message?
- **Clarifying Questions**: What questions were asked?
- **Reactions/Pushbacks**: What were the pushbacks/reactions and how did the “concerned professional” respond?
- **Closing**: How did the “concerned professional” close the conversation?